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Finley Letters

James B. Finley Letters

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4-26-1836

## Letter from John McDonald to James B. Finley

John McDonald

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Poplar Ridge April 26<sup>th</sup> 1836

Dear Sir

I intend writing the life of Gen. Mearns. There are few men who passed through more variety of scenes than he. From 1789-1800 up to the treaty of Greenville, he passed through as many hair breadth escapes by flood and field as any man in the west. Soon after the war was settled, he was a very efficient legislator, both in the state legislature and in congress. During the late war he played a distinguished part. When Gen. Harrison was forced to resign, he was chosen commander of the 8<sup>th</sup> military district, (the western army.) Since that time, he has been a member of congress, and Governor of the state. He has many virtues, and many vices.

you are probably aware that some difficulties have existed, between <sup>him and me</sup> for many years, and in consequence of our cold blood towards each other <sup>it was not</sup> my intention to enter fully on a sketch of his life and character. Some who are our mutual friends ~~wish~~ wish me to engage in the work: and what is a little strange he is very anxious that I should be his biographer; and I have made up my mind to commence the work as soon as my leisure will permit.

you will be astonished when I inform you, that since you left this neighborhood, that I have received solicitations, from several and some total strangers, to write a history of Ohio, from her first settlement up to the present time. They flatter me, as being the strongest and most forcible <sup>writer</sup> in the country. Can I believe them? No. I cannot. ~~My readers~~ The readers of my narratives were constantly informed, that I was one of <sup>the</sup> old pioneers; it is the novelty of seeing an old hunter, turn author, that causes my narratives, to meet with the little sunshine approbation bestowed upon them.

Whether I am a good, bad, or indifferent writer, it was ~~at~~ your

Col J McDonnell  
1836

Examined  
Nov 1847



your flattering solicitations which brought me before the public as an author: and of course, all though I am the oldest man you are my literary father.

As I am thinking of correcting and revising my narratives, and publishing them in a book; I wish you to have some talk with some of the book printers and book binders of Cincinnati, about <sup>what</sup> it would cost to print and bind 1,000 copies <sup>these be</sup> duodecimo of about 300 pages - and how much a page it would cost should it <sup>be</sup> more pages than 300, and how <sup>much</sup> <sup>deducted</sup> should be <sup>be</sup> less number. Also how much it <sup>would</sup> cost <sup>should</sup> I with the privilege of selling to the above number of ~~copies~~ 500 or 1,000 more copies. One half the number to be bound in sheep, the other in ~~boards~~ <sup>boards</sup>. When the expense of printing, and binding, is ascertained, I can then judge better what to do about the premises.

you will stare, when you hear me talk about church affairs. but even so it is. I have lately had a talk with a methodist of upwards of 40 years standing. we came to the conclusion, that the year for your circuit riders began at the wrong ~~end~~. We think the year should commence in april. Should <sup>they</sup> move into new circuits in April it would be a more healthy season, and by <sup>the</sup> time the sickly season would commence, they would <sup>be</sup> seasoned to the water, and at most there. Besides the families of preachers could tend their gardens, and other truck patches, with a knowledge, that <sup>they</sup> would remain at the place to eat the produce of their labour. This subject is submitted to your consideration.

Our friends on, and around poplar ridge, are in good health; and wish you and yours, health, peace, and happiness.

Rev J. B. Finley

John McDonald

P.S Gen Martineau  
I met <sup>him</sup> on the way <sup>late</sup> he talk  
you left here, if you  
and absent about ever  
I hope we are live  
you in it before May we